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EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 1/29/07  
US 227  
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January 25, 2007

John Sinrud, Chair of the House Appropriations Committee,

Mr. Chairman, members of the House Appropriations Committee, on behalf of the Montana Sierra Club I'd like to take this opportunity to provide additional information to the committee relative to questions which were raised during the Hearing on House Bill 227 by Rep. Kasten.

Representative Kasten raised what many citizens voice are concerns regarding timber harvest litigation, forest fires and CO2 emissions. And, while I understand that the Committee already knows that the Sierra Club is not involved in any litigation regarding timber harvests in Montana, there is information we'd like to provide the committee regarding what we believe is a common misconception regarding harvesting of timber and its relationship to forest fires and subsequent CO2 emissions.

We don't believe that environmental organizations which are involved, or may be perceived to be involved, in timber sale litigation are necessarily the factor in causing wildfires that is often heard in the public debate. Many of the groups perceived as litigating and delaying timber sales are actually working to expedite forest activities that create jobs & harvesting board feet while helping to protect communities from wildfire.

The Sierra Club, for example, is active with the Kootenai Forest Stakeholders Coalition (not to be confused with the Lincoln County Coalition) in NW Montana. As staff for the Sierra Club in Montana I was elected by this diverse group of loggers, County Commissioners, economic development folks, conservationists, hunters, etc. to be the Vice President of the board of Directors. This coalition has endorsed five fuel reduction projects since its conception just one year ago. This has already resulted in expedited work, jobs and harvesting of timber on the ground.

I invite you to contact Lincoln County Commissioners Marianne Roose, Rita Windom or John Konzen and learn how these stakeholders are finding common ground and expediting good work in the woods.

On occasion timber sales are challenged by certain environmental organizations. We do not necessarily agree that delays in these projects cause an increase in wildfires. Not one acre that burned in 2006 was awaiting treatment that was under litigation. Also, the presumption that an "un-managed" forest is more prone to wildfire is statistically false.

The opposite is actually true – managed forests, particularly those that are heavily managed, present an increase fire risk due to several factors.


Managed forests normally have roads through them. Roads bring people who drive vehicles and carry matches. A vast majority of human-caused fires start in the roaded & managed portion of the forest. Fires tend to burn hotter and faster through clear-cuts and monoculture forests. The condition of the forest after commercial logging is such that an open canopy allows the ground surface and fuels to dry out and slash piles left by commercial logging operations further increase fire risk for years.

There is evidence, on the other hand, that the recent increase in the earth's temperature is increasing the incident of severe wildfires. Such fires of course send more CO2 into the atmosphere, which further increases the earth's temperature, which leads to even more wildfires, which then sends even more CO2 into the atmosphere, etc., etc.

Decreasing CO2 emissions from industrial sources or providing an economic incentive to sequester or capture CO2 emissions can, however, have a positive impact on this troubling cycle. This is why the Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club stands in strong support of HB 227.

I hope this information has been useful and I urge the Committee to support HB 227.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Clark', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Clark  
Montana Sierra Club